| This report is public | |
|---|---|
| **Risk Monitoring Report End of Year 2023–2024** | |
| **Committee** | Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee |
| **Date of Committee** | 17 July 2024 |
| **Portfolio Holder presenting the report** | Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant |
| **Date Portfolio Holder agreed report** | 10 June 2024 |
| **Report of** | Assistant Director – Customer Focus, Shona Ware |

## Purpose of report

To update the committee on how well the council is managing its Strategic Risks, as part of our duty to remain compliant, and to be able to identify any improvements required. This report presents the risk monitoring report for the end of the financial year 2023-2024.

## 1.  Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee resolves:

1.1  To note the Risk Monitoring Report for end of year 2023-24.

1.2  To review the Council's current Risk Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 2)  and  provide comments and/or suggestions to be incorporated in the Risk Management Policy 2024/25 for Executive consideration.

## 2.  Executive Summary

2.1  The Leadership Risk Register is reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team and Executive Committees every quarter; however, this is a live document and therefore is updated as and when required, to manage risk effectively. There were no score changes in the Leadership Risk Register during March 2024.

## Implications & Impact Assessments

| Implications | Commentary |
|---|---|
| **Finance** | There are no financial and resource implications arising directly from this report.<br>Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 19 June 2024 |

| Legal | Risk training has been given to senior managers by the Performance Team. Regular reviews ensure that any change in risk is identified early on so that any steps to mitigate risk can be taken. Alison Coles, Legal Services Operations Manager, Solicitor 19 June 2024 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Risk Management | This report contains a full update with regards to the council's risk position at the end of 2023/24. There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.<br>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 17 June 2024 | | | |
| **Impact Assessments** | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Commentary |
| **Equality Impact** | | x | | There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.<br>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 17 June 2024 |
| **A** Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality? | | x | | |
| **B** Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users? | | x | | |
| **Climate & Environmental Impact** | | x | | |
| **ICT & Digital Impact** | | x | | |
| **Data Impact** | | x | | |
| **Procurement & subsidy** | | x | | |
| **Council Priorities** | Not applicable | | | |
| **Human Resources** | Not applicable | | | |
| **Property** | Not applicable | | | |

| Consultation & Engagement | Not applicable |
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# Supporting Information

## 3. Background

3.1 The Council carries out regular reviews to identify risks at the earliest opportunity so that it can assess and mitigate them as soon as possible.

3.2 Risks that may affect the Council's performance, and particularly, on its ability to deliver its corporate priorities are captured in its Leadership Risk Register.

3.3 The Councils approach to risk management is set out in its Risk Management Strategy 2023-24, which is attached in Appendix 2. The Audit, Accounts and Risk Committee is responsible for reviewing the strategy and making any recommended improvements to the Executive Committee for their consideration.

## 4. Details

4.1 The overall position as of the end of the financial year of all Leadership risks, after mitigating actions and controls have been put in place, is as follows:

| | | Probability | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 - Remote | 2 - Unlikely | 3 - Possible | 4 - Probable | 5 - Highly Probable |
| Impact | 5 - Catastrophic | | | L08 | | |
| | 4 - Major | | L06-L09 | L03-L07-L11-L14 | L01 | |
| | 3 - Moderate | | L04-L05-L10 | L02-L12 | L13 | |
| | 2 - Minor | | | | | |
| | 1 - Insignificant | | | | | |

Figure 1: Risk scorecard showing the risk scores in the Leadership Risk Register for end of 2023-24.

4.2 There were however changes to the controls, mitigating actions and comments for the following risks:

Cherwell District Council

| Risk | Score | Direction of travel | Latest Update on 06/02/2024 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **L03 - CDC Local Plan -** Failure to ensure sound, up to date local plan remains in place for Cherwell resulting in poor planning decisions such as development in inappropriate locations, inability to demonstrate an adequate supply of land for housing and planning by appeal | 12 Medium Risk | ↔ | **Controls:-** • Local Development Scheme (LDS) is actively managed and reviewed, built into Service Plan, and integral to staff appraisals of all those significantly involved in Plan preparation and review. • Team capacity and capability kept under continual review with gaps and pressures identified and managed at the earliest opportunity. • On-going review of planning appeal decisions to assess robustness and relevance of Local Plan policies. • Regular Councillor briefings to ensure all timescale requirements are understood. Ensuring that staff and consultancy resourcing is maintained.<br><br>**Mitigating actions: -** • Annual (Authority) Monitoring Reports presented to the Executive on plan making and policy effectiveness. • An updated LDS presented to the Executive when there is a significant change in the circumstances for the Local Plan timetable. • Programme built into Directorate level objectives (e.g. via Service Plans) and staff appraisals; on-going preparation of the Local Plan is a service priority. • Project management of the Local Plan process continues. • Regular Corporate Director, Portfolio Holder and Members Advisory Group briefings • Continuance of internal Members' Advisory Group meetings. Early briefing for new Portfolio Holder in May 2024 and any new Councillors.<br><br>**Comments: -** Consultation on a draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review took place from 22 September to 3 November 2023. A new programme for the Local Plan was agreed when the Council's Executive approved an updated 'Local Development Scheme' on 5 September 2023. An Annual Monitoring Report was approved by the Executive on 4 December 2023. A 'Proposed Submission' (Reg. 19) draft of the Plan will be prepared for Autumn 2024 and regular progress reports provided to the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development. |

| Risk | Score | Direction of travel | Latest Update on 06/02/2024 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **L08 - Cyber Security -** If there is insufficient security with regards to the data held and IT systems used by the councils and insufficient protection against malicious attacks on council's systems then there is a risk of: a data breach, or a loss of service. | 15 Medium Risk | ↔ | **Mitigating actions:**<br>• Additional 3rd party monitoring in place using a SIEM tool and 24/7 monitoring via a SOC.<br>• All staff reminded to be vigilant to unexpected emails due to the heightened risk of cyber-attack due to escalating tensions in Eastern Europe and at critical periods such as the run up to Elections.<br>• Cyber Security advice and guidance regularly highlighted to all staff.<br>• Cyber Security is mandatory e-learning for all staff to be completed annually and is part of new starters induction training. Additionally, regular Mimecast videos sent to all users for bitesize regular training.<br>• Cyber Security Officer has reviewed advice and provided assurance on our compliance.<br>• External Health Check undertaken each year and Cabinet Office PSN compliance reviewed and certified each year to ensure the infrastructure is secure to connect to the PSN.<br>• Internal Audit completed cyber audits with no major issues or significant risks identified.<br>• IT implemented an intrusion prevention and detection system which is monitored, and regular actions are implemented from the resulting reports.<br>• IT Officer has specific responsibility for Cyber Security, and we have engaged a specialist partner to advise on industry best practices and standards.<br>• Microsoft Multi-Factor Authentication is embedded to authenticate users providing an enhanced level of cyber security. |
| **L09 -Safeguarding the vulnerable - Internal procedures-** Failure to follow our internal policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children or raising concerns about their welfare. | 8 Low Risk | ↔ | **Comments:**<br>Monthly Safeguarding training/ briefings continue with good attendance, Safeguarding News Bulletin to all safeguarding champions keeps Safeguarding at the forefront and identifies shared learning. Outcome of the Peer review was excellent and actions arising will be picked up in Q1and 2 24/25. |

4.3    The full Leadership Risk Register is attached in Appendix 1.


# 5.    Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

5.1    The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: No alternative options have been identified as this report is for information only.

## 6   Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

6.1   This report provides an update on how well the council is managing its Strategic Risks up to the end the twelfth month of the financial year, and requests feedback from this Committee regarding our current Risk Management Strategy to support its review and update.

## Decision Information

| Key Decision | Not applicable |
|---|---|
| Subject to Call in | Not applicable |
| If not, why not subject to call in | Not applicable |
| Ward(s) Affected | All |

## Document Information

| Appendices | |
|---|---|
| Appendix 1 | Leadership Risk Register End of Year 2023 -24 |
| Appendix 2 | Risk Management Strategy 2023-24 |
| Background Papers | None |
| Reference Papers | None |
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